

IN THE
INDIANA TAX COURT

NO. 49T10-9309- TA-70

TOWN OF ST. JOHN, <i>et al.</i> ,)
)
Petitioners,)
)
v.)
)
DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT)
FINANCE as successor to the)
STATE BOARD OF TAX)
COMMISSIONERS,)
)
Respondents.)

MONTHLY REPORT 29

As successor to the State Board of Tax Commissioners, this is the twenty-ninth monthly report of the Department of Local Government Finance ("DLGF") under the Court's order dated May 31, 2000, 729 N.E.2d 242, 247. The report explains the DLGF's activities during October 2002 to implement the Court's order.

Lake County Reassessment

The DLGF appointed a project manager for the Lake County reassessment. James Hemming, a long-time employee of the State Board of Tax Commissioners and subsequently the DLGF with experience in assessment, will take over the project from interim manager Commissioner Lisa Acobert. DLGF staff met with Cole Layer Trumble, Crowe-Chizek and Manatron on October 22 to introduce Hemming to the process and to

get an update on status. Data collection, land valuation and data input are proceeding, but data input is lagging slightly behind schedule. In addition to the night shift, a weekend shift is in the works for data entry. Crowe-Chizek will be hooked in to the data network through the Internet in order to maximize efficiencies.

County Surveys

The DLGF plans another survey in November or early December to get updated information.

Computer Software

The DLGF continues to work with computer vendors that are not yet certified at the state level and to advise counties on implementation of software programs and certification at the local level. Nine counties have certified software at the local, but patches are still necessary to implement some programming issues. Manatron has not yet provided the module for Form 11 production, but is expected to have it ready soon.

Another computer vendor, Plexis, met with the DLGF twice in October to implement the certification process. The DLGF expects this vendor to be certified at the state level soon. The vendor continues to encourage counties to input data into their old systems and assured both these counties and the DLGF that it will convert the data as soon as it is certified. The vendor believes this will occur very quickly once it demonstrates its process and software to the Department.

Training

The DLGF has scheduled equalization classes for assessing officials for November in locations across the state.

Budgets, Rates and Levies

Between September 30 and October 18, the DLGF's Budget Division conducted budget hearings for over 2,400 taxing units. The purpose of the hearings was to gather evidence pertaining to the 2003 budgets, tax rates and tax levies for various units of government. The Budget Division is currently reviewing the evidence presented to determine the maximum budget, tax rates and tax levies allowable by law. Because of delays in reassessment, the Budget Division expects to certify appropriation estimates on or before February 15. Taxing units will have seven days to respond to changes made before the DLGF certifies final information. When the county auditor certifies final assessed values, the DLGF will recalculate and certify budgets, tax rates and tax levies.

Respectfully submitted,

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